

Another

244 fertility medicine consists of the following mixture: 1) bark
789 of the Simarubacea Irvingia barteri Hook. f. (andó'k; 2) bark
[824] bark of the Anacardiacea Pseudospondias microcarpa (Rich.) Engl.
(ofó's); 3) elephant manure; 4) sand from the Campo or the
Uelle; 5) salt. On the eve of sowing this mixture is added to the
nuts. This, too, must be understood as a direct transfer of power:
the groundnuts are to be as numerous as the fruits of the two
plants named; they are to become as enormous as the pile of
elephant manure; as numerous as sand in the Campo — we would
say, as the sands of the ocean; and as innumerable as the grains
[824] of salt. Finally, certain Liliaceae (ayán) are planted between
the groundnuts so that their leaves may become as green as the
lilies in the field. As can be seen, there is no lack of friendly
encouragement and good examples.

244 The fruit, illustrated in cross-section by Plate 6, Draw-
ings a and b, usually has two seeds, more rarely three, and still
more rarely one. Something reminiscent of our love feast occurs
[195] when a boy at work finds a fruit with three seeds in his mother's
basket or in the field, calls his friends, and shares the seeds with
them. This is called euphemistically: bi kī kābād, "we dissect a
goat." Thus, we have here the doctrine: Do not forget to do good
and to share with your fellow man when you are living in abun-
dant! It is probably more by way of a game that the Pangwe,
[195] especially the children, sometimes eat the nuts raw. Otherwise
raw nuts are prepared principally for soup or compote. It is also
customary to boil the whole fruit and then eat the seeds. The
● [195] nuts are stored in large, tall baskets of raffia pith, which are hung
under the roof or placed on a bed, or the nuts may be placed
loose on the groundnut loft, akān owīnō.

433 As a result of their laziness and indifference, the Pangwe
435 seldom have enough groundnuts, so there is always a period of
244 time when they have to do without them until the next harvest has
been brought in and is sufficiently dried. This is the reason that
in the Ntum and Fang regions at these times the price for a "plate"
(2)

2. The flat plate-shaped baskets
called bush plates are a unit of
measurement.

[804]

227 upwards in such a fashion that their tips just protrude above the
423 water.

It goes without saying that such weirs can be built only when the water level is lowest. As soon as the water in the river rises, it carries many fish with it and /113/ drives those which are not caught in the baskets of the lateral weirs onto the screens where they often remain in large numbers and are simply picked up by the Negroes. They are reached by a special bridge built out from the bank or by climbing along the edge of the lateral weir.

227 This kind of fish weir occurs everywhere except in the north.
423 Usually the chief induces a number of people to construct such a weir; these people then have the sole right of ownership to the fish weir and the fish. They do give their relatives and acquaintances, probably for nothing, a part of their catch, either from a sense of solidarity or because they expect that in similar circumstances they will be provided for in the same way. On the other hand they
[425] demand payment from strangers, the amount depending on the size

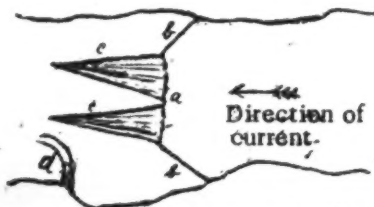


Fig. 60. Diagram of a Fish Weir in the Abea:
(a) main weir, (b) lateral weirs, (c) screens of
the main weir, (d) a tree growing on the bank
and bent over the water.

of the fish, one or two spears (seven or 14 pfennigs) apiece. The major part of the catch is consumed immediately; the rest is dried. Since fish spoil quickly in the tropics, only a very few leave the place where they are caught; another reason for this is that the uncertain conditions in the Fang area prevent regular trade (1).

1. There are no markets at all.

227 In addition to the contrivance just described, consisting of main
285 and lateral weirs, one also encounters lateral weirs used by themselves

252 Throughout the region such a "kank"¹ is equal in value to a
 435 tobacco leaf (commercial tobacco) or a spoonful of salt. This is
 484 equal to a piece of spear money or seven pfennigs. They are gen-
 erally used as provisions for bearers and employees of the Whites
 because of their convenience and availability, their unlimited sup-
 ply, and their popularity with the natives.

Dried cassava rolls (engū'nā-mbūm).

252 As was mentioned before, the ordinary rolls do not keep longer
 484 than three days. Hence a special procedure is used in their prepara-
 • 257 tion for longer journeys or for situations when one cannot or does
 not want to make the rolls again and again. In this procedure, the
 cassava balls are placed on the drying loft for a month after they
 have been washed; only then are they processed, that is, pulverized
 on stones, wrapped in leaves, and boiled. Sometimes the balls
 themselves are carried along on the journey. They are softened in
 water when they are wanted, boiled, and consumed cold. Both
 kinds of cassava rolls are called engū'nā-mbūn.

(b) Cassava cutlets (osā-mbūn, ngō-mbūn IV).

252 A very bitter and at the same time poisonous species of cassava
 is made into cassava cutlets. For this purpose, the pieces of root
 are peeled with a cutlass, halved lengthwise or quartered, and boiled
 with one and a half liters of water for an hour in a pot lined with
 plantain leaves. Then the roots are taken out, cut like a loaf into
 slices, and hung for a day in running water inside a basket lined with
 leaves. After that, they are thoroughly washed on the net described
 under "Fishing" on page 80, and they are then eaten cold. /156/

Dried cassava cutlets (džā[s]-mbūh).

[251] These are dried after the boiling and before being hung in the
 484 water, in the same way as engū'nā-mbūn. They are used in the same
 situations.

‡[i.e. cassava roll. - Analyst.]

252 frequently pouring on water, grinds them to flour (half a basket of ears produces a heaping basketwork plate of flour from which three loaves are made). The flour in a basketwork plate lined with leaves is stirred with water to form a batter; salt, pepper, and frequently [262] also shrimp and dragonfly larvae are added. This batter, as in the case of the women's cassava nkūna mbūn, is placed in a *Sarcophrynium* leaf folded in the shape of a stirrup, and it is boiled for an hour in a pot with a little water. The end result is a dish which, while it is rather heavy, tastes quite good. /160/

(d) Maize mush (ngbwēt).

Maize mush is made of fresh maize flour which, when boiled, makes a white pulpy soup. Since I have not closely observed its preparation, I am unable to give any details.

The remaining plants, such as taro, macabo, yams, and so forth, are not sufficiently important to be discussed in relation to the various ways of preparing them. The reader will, I think, from the information given so far, derive a clear enough picture of the multiple uses made by the Pangwe of their vegetable foodstuffs.

Meat is boiled in pots by itself -- just like fish, which, as among us, are dressed and scaled -- or it is boiled in a leaf bundle with groundnuts and ngon. As for other ways of preparation, the [257] Pangwe are familiar with roasting, but they use this method only in order to make the food keep and to preserve it.

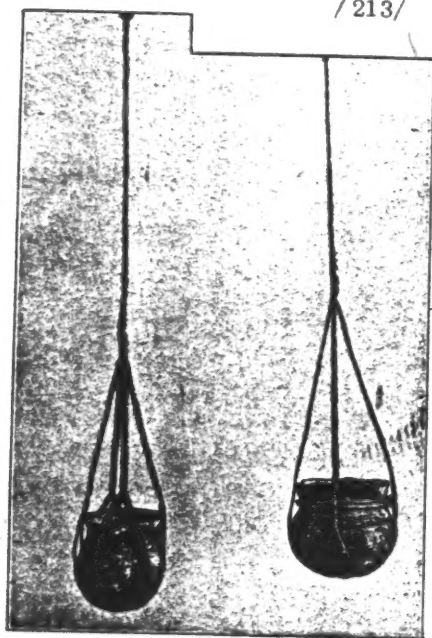
264 Meals are quite irregular and poorly distributed:

[539] "kikīase afōk anū, hamoš eban e nkōk,
In the morning a little bit for the mouth, (mid) day a loan for the jaw,

alu bepfūm"
at night, quite full.

In the morning, soon after getting up, they usually eat a small amount of a cold cassava dish or something similar, which the women have cooked the night before since they usually have to go to the plantations early. In the course of the forenoon they content themselves with a little snack of cassava bread, bananas, and the like.

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Fig. 164. Mwele Device for
Hanging Cooking Pots.

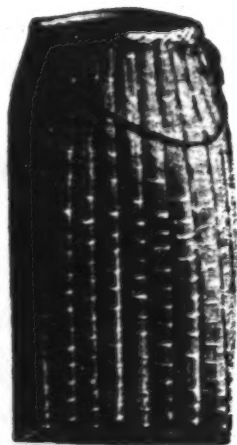


Fig. 165. Storage for
Groundnuts.

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283 elements of the same kind, and these are braided together into a pigtail (helmet caps and helmet hairdos; see also device of the Mwele for hanging pots, Fig. 164). /Fig. 165 appears here in the original text. /

(2) Carrying bands and braided mats.

[482] The carrying bands are braided from Triumfetta bast strips (two under, two over). The braided mats are made from leaf strips of the screw pine Pandanus (awū'ba, kūbuga; contracted form, akūā) which intertwine like a chessboard. Mats are found only in the [285] southern border region and are probably imported. There is a boat- [439] like satchel for the novices of the Jaunde moon cult (see Section 11 /Ed., this section in Vol. II is not translated/), which is braided like the mats and made of the same material.

(3) Drying boards and boxes.

283 The floors of the drying boards are made by braiding raffia
285 stalk strips (four under, three over). The bottoms and parts of the
415 side walls of the boxes are made from braided palm bands (three under, three over). /214/

(4) Storage baskets.

285 The storage basket (angūn Jaunde, angunda Mwele) is a
251 transitional form between the box and the basket insofar as its
415 basic material is raffia pith boards (Fig. 165) placed next to each other and held together by stalk strips of Sarcophrynium tied around them. The storage baskets are used in the house for storing food-stuffs, such as groundnuts, ears of corn, and so forth.

(5) Baskets.

285 Basketwork is done either with one material or with a combina-
415 tion of two different materials. The former is the case with the following.



Fig. 169. Men's Small Basket with Decorations of Hide and Strings of Beads.

Ancistrophyllum. In the latter case, I found them strengthened from the outside by little sticks of the same material braided in diagonally.

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5. Rattle baskets (ngōt). /217/ These appear in two forms: the first and larger one consists of the same material as the carrying basket; the second and smaller one has the same reinforcing sticks in its wall as the previous baskets and a piece of calabash shell for the bottom (concerning their use, see Section 20 /Ed., this section in Vol. II is not translated/ and the illustration there).

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(6) Basketwork bowls of the Mwele (ekátā).

For these (Fig. 170), there are likewise active braiding strips and one passive /Fig. 169 appears here in the original text/ braiding strand wound in a spiral, as in the true baskets of the second series. In contrast to the latter, however, the spiral begins in the middle of the bottom and thus forms the bottom and the wall, and it is held together by braiding strips woven in at right angles. These bowls, which perhaps are the result of northern influence (Hausa /Hausa/?), are used by the Mwele to store maize meal and as plates for finer foods.

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X.—Food. Cooking.

Food used by the Fang is precisely similar to that of all other tribes inhabiting the great zone of palms and bananas as described by Humboldt. Added to these ordinary foods of the Fang is their liking for human flesh, indulged in to this day in spite of the law, which is often powerless to reach and punish the offenders. *Caesava*, *môde*, plantains, *bikon*, crushed gourd seeds, *ngongon*, corn; *mekobe*, a most nutritive tuber, sweet potatoes, yams, palm oil, bananas, snails and various mollusca. Fish is wrapped in plantain leaves and boiled, or set on hot ashes and fire piled on top of the *bundle* of food. All kinds of meat is eaten, from deer down to the smallest bush rat; snakes are considered very good meat. No portion is wasted, every morsel of skin and intestines are eaten. Goats and chickens are raised for food and trade. Corn or other cereals are not used for the purpose of making bread. Milk is not used. Preparations of milk such as butter and cheese are not made. There is a marked preference for meats. When an animal is slaughtered, women bring wooden bowls to collect the blood in. The blood is often cooked mixed with palm oil. A Fang will eat almost any kind of known food and at any time, providing it is not his *Eki* or taboo, given him during infancy, prohibiting the eating of a certain kind of food, unless partaken of under certain conditions. Except for the *Eki* men, women and children partake of the same food. The Fang are improvident. When on long journeys they often chew a piece of Kola nut, but more commonly chew pieces of a certain root; it has several different names. Palm oil is extensively used in cooking. Salt (*uku*) is much enjoyed and sought after in trade. Sugar is only used in the form of sugar cane and eaten uncooked. The chiefs, or rather headmen, have no special form of food. Eating earth is not indulged in. So far as I am aware, all fish, flesh and fowl is cooked before being eaten. Flesh is often extremely high, at times positively bad, before it is eaten, but not one morsel is ever wasted. [181] [252] [262]

Fish, fowl, bush rats, snakes and all kinds of meats are smoked or sun-dried; food prepared thus is carried on journeys in the bush wrapped in leaves and eaten with *mboa* (cassava) without any further preparation. Permanent ovens for baking are not in use. Meat is roasted on small spits over the log fire or wrapped up in leaves and hot ashes banked around and on top of it. Native vegetables are frequently cooked with meats, plantains are usually boiled separately or roasted close to the fire. Most cooking utensils used by the Fang near the coast are iron or brass pots, imported by white traders; but farther inland the native pots are much more in vogue. These native pots are made of grey clay and sun-dried; they become harder and stronger by use, and vary in size and capacity from a pint to about three gallons. [251] [484] [439] [445] [323]

Cooking vessels are not kept very clean, being simply rinsed out with a little water; but if the vessel is a brass trade pot or kettle, it is usually taken to the river or a near stream, and scoured bright; but I fear the chief reason for doing [264]

- 241 this is, because, to a Fang eye, polished brass looks *mbung* (handsome) and is attractive for trade. Vessels are usually placed on top of the fire and not
 262 suspended over it; vegetables are frequently placed in stews. No separate dwelling house exists for cooking, it is carried on in the dwelling house. The water used to
 356 wash a dirty pot with is often thrown out on the earth floor of the dwelling, children playing in the wet dirt. In all domestic matters the Fang are very filthy.
 [514] I have on more than one occasion when inside a native hut seen children micturate and defecate on the earth floor close to where the mother was cooking, the women
 [854] and men present taking very little notice, and only occasionally placing the child
 [462] outside the door. Cooking is exclusively the duty of women, a *real man* will not cook. Food is often highly seasoned with hot native red and green peppers, and
 252 food thus prepared is much appreciated. The food is usually well cooked through, with the exception of plantains which are often only half boiled and served quite hard. Large round stones are used for rubbing and reducing to powder gourd seeds and various tubers. Smoking and salting are the only methods practised
 • 251 for preserving food, and on account of the value of salt and the difficulty of transporting it inland, it is seldom thus employed.

- Drinks.*—Rum has been carried from the coast by white traders and natives far inland and is used whenever obtainable, but the chief drink is cold water. Palm wine is made called *meyak*. Except in places where a trade factory existed I have seen very few cases of intoxication among the Fang, but when they can obtain rum it seems to completely demoralize them. Tea and coffee are known to
 [272] people living near white settlers. When a party of headmen and others have taken a meal at the mission house, tea and coffee were greatly enjoyed and cups frequently re-filled. The first meal is usually about eight or nine o'clock; the
 264 natives think the white man eats very early; a mid-day meal is served and the evening repast is usually about sunset.

- Food is frequently brought to the men inside the *abeng* (palaver house); at other times an entire family eats together inside the dwelling house. No ceremonies whatever precede the commencement of meals. When a son is born, or on the occasion of a wedding, and after some large palaver has been settled, a feast is
 514 usually given. Invited guests and strangers partake together with the town folk
 264 of the food prepared; it is usually served on the earth floor of the palaver house, on plantain leaves, and in cooking pots, each person helping himself. The women do not eat with the men inside the palaver house.

Mode of preparing Mboa.

- 252 *Ba du mbóá osui, e vóm a ne ndítál : a kaga boma mēlu mēla, be keli tās : be sáli*
 539 *ne nye : be náti mbúk : be kēzi nye mbúk iti be nou ntum : beña tyak : bēnga vul : be kaga mana vul : be kēzi nye ē mvrē : ekoba ji : ve telē mvrē mboa : vena mboa abea.*